

THE MORNING NEWS

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2014 Patriotic Song contests begin this week



CCND committee and Minister Oduber

Minister of Tourism, Transport, Primary Sector and Culture, Otmar Oduber, welcomed the committee dedicated to organizing events for Aruba's upcoming national holiday, Himno y Bandera (Anthem and Flag Day) on Tuesday, March 18.

An integral part of the celebration is the cultural show on the eve of the holiday, conducted in the band shell at the Plaza Betico Croes, behind the Cas Di Cultura. On that evening, the winners of the song festival will perform their original works, along with a number of modern and folkloric music and dance groups.

Organizing and conduct-

ing the adult singing contest is Harry Croes, who also does the annual Dande Festival at the end of the year. President of the Centro di Bario Tanki Leendert, Ray-Anne Hernandez, is in charge of the youth festival. The dates for the competition are over this coming weekend, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 14, 15 and 16. The event will take place at the Plaza Turismo, on the eastern outskirts of Oranjestad.

There are 91 singers signed up, in a variety of age categories, who will be performing with back up from fifteen different bands. The finalists will compete for the titles and honor of being part

of the cultural show on Sunday, the 16th beginning at 6:00 PM with the youth category. The contenders are divided into four age categories ranging from four-years-old to seventeen.

The adult event is expected to begin that same night at 8:00 PM and last until midnight. This will be a single event, with the previous nights dedicated to the youngsters for the winnowing process of selecting the finalists.

The nine contenders for the adult title are veteran performers Lilian Richardson, Danny Koolman, Jenino Ridderstap, Hildward Croes, Gloria Croes di Grupo la Bomba, Ronny Kock, Fan Fan Flemming, Franklin Granadillo and Eric Chong. Over 10,000 Arubian florins (\$5570 U.S.) will be awarded in prizes.

The event is organized under the auspices of the CCDN and Aruba's Department of Culture. All the public is invited to attend and cheer on their favorite singer and enjoy the original music composed performed by some of the island's most talented artists.

Aruba says 'Thank You' to Jean and Michelle Begin



Community activist Michelle Begin is well known in her home town of Toronto, and after more than 30 years of spending winters on Aruba, she has made quite a name on the island for her hard work and good deeds.

For the third year in a row she single-handedly organized her fundraising Ms. Canada Beach Volleyball Tournament on Sunday, March 9,

where raised funds were turned over to deserving organizations. Ernest Giel of the Aruba Tourism Authority was very happy to express the ATA's appreciation of Michelle's efforts to benefit local foundations, as well as the devotion of her and her husband Jean over the last 35 years, with Aruba being their premiere choice as a vacation destination. The Canadian couple were awarded the titles of "Ambassadors of Goodwill," as well as a newly-minted commemorative coin, which the ATA is just beginning to issue to dedicated visitors coming to the island for more than 30 years consecutively.

South American bloc Unasur to meet on Venezuela crisis

VALPARAISO (AFP) - Foreign ministers from countries belonging to the South American Unasur group will meet Wednesday to form a committee to encourage dialogue in protest-hit Venezuela.

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff said the committee's purpose would be to "build an atmosphere of agreement, consensus and stability there in Venezuela."

"We always endeavor to maintain democratic order," Rousseff said.

At least 21 people have been killed in five weeks of sometimes violent protests against the government of President Nicolas Maduro.

Demonstrations erupted February 4 in the western

border city of San Cristobal and quickly spread to Caracas and other cities, amid deepening public discontent over crime, inflation, shortages and police crackdowns.

The Unasur meeting was agreed to by South American leaders who were in Chile Tuesday for the inauguration of the country's new President Michelle Bachelet.

The ceremony was not attended by Maduro, who canceled his trip to Chile at the last minute.

Bachelet, who returned to the presidency after four years out of office, was sworn in in the port of Valparaiso, 120 kilometers (75 miles) west of Santiago.

Malaysia jet impostaers 'more likely migrants than terrorists'

BANGKOK (AFP) - The two mystery passengers who triggered an international terrorism probe into a missing Malaysian jet now appear to be young Iranian migrants seeking a new life overseas, officials said Tuesday.

Nourmohammadi, 18.

They then switched to stolen Austrian and Italian passports to board Beijing-bound flight MH370, which vanished Saturday with 239 people on board.

Interpol Secretary General Ronald Noble said it appeared increasingly certain "these two individuals were probably not terrorists".

"The interest seems to be dying down because they might just be people who were being smuggled or trafficked," he told a news conference in France.

"And from Interpol's perspective the fear or the concern we should all have is that more than a billion times each year there are people that either cross borders or board planes without having passports screened against Interpol's database," he added.

	Oil Product prices Department of Economic, Commerce and Industry Affairs	
Minister of Economic, Communication Energy and Environmental Affairs announces changes in oil products prices as of March 12, 2014:		
Gasoline unleaded-premium 226,3 cent p/ltr. (+ 6,0 cent) Diesel ULS 208,1 cent p/ltr. (+ 3,4 cent) Kerosine 200,5 cent p/ltr. (+ 3,0 cent)		

These above mentioned prices includes BBO.

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Proceeds from the 3rd annual Ms. Canada Beach Volleyball Tournament distributed



A donation for Ambiente Feliz



Donation to Police medical assistance

Scholarship contest.

An informal awards ceremony was conducted at the

teams and the raffle tickets sold, as well as donations Michelle collected from her fellow vacationers, the total was \$7,654 U.S.

Winners of the volleyball tournament was the team from Smit & Dorlas, and the Marriott Vacation Club team won a new addition to the event, a beach tennis tournament. They received stunning trophies.

Foundations to benefit from her efforts are:

Continued on pg 5



A donation for Kibrahacha



Donation Washington Soccer Club

ORANJESTAD -- Community activist Michelle Begin is well known in her home town of Toronto, and after more than 30 years of spending winters on Aruba, she has made quite a name on the island for her hard work and good deeds. For the third year in a row

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ATA meets to discuss USA market and is intent on diversification



FEB/19/20

In an effort to ensure that all tourism partners are on the same wave length and are equally effective and efficient, The Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) meets with her partners regularly and organizes different internal and external encounters.

Aruba is growing consistently year by year, also month by month. The tourism market is changing daily, both in what is being offered tourists to attract them to the destination, as well as what the tourist leave behind and what he is looking for in his visit. Different aspects are in the equation, for example, adventure, health, rest, shopping, etc.

An encounter took place just recently in the US on February 18 and 19. This meeting was divided into two segments, one day to discuss topics among ATA executives at the ATA headquarters, Canada and the US, and the following day to meet with the marketing partners. The discussion centered primarily around the 2014-2016 Business Plan and the strategic

actions for the North American market.

During this meeting they also discussed the results of the second study on "Marketing and Promotion Elasticity Values," and "Benchmarking Study on Value for Money Perception of US Visitors and Price Checking." Different comparisons of markets were made to determine strategy and which direction to concentrate on. This included first time visitors vs. repeat visitors and Baby Boomers vs. Generation X/Y visitors.

A new goal was presented, namely, to expand that segment of the market with visitors who have an annual income of 150 thousand dollars. Traditionally the focus was on the 100 thousand dollar market.

Another important theme of the meeting between the ATA North America and the ATA Main Office was the "need moments," which are periods that require more attention to attract visitors to Aruba. This is always one of ATA's priorities.

On the 19th they held a so-

called interagency meeting. Here CEO Ronella Tjin Asoe-Croes, CMO (Chief Marketing Officer) Sanju Luidens-Daryanani and Business Manager Dyane Vis-Escalona met with agencies working for Aruba in the US and Canada.

American agencies working for Aruba are: Ansira—an integrated customer engagement company, which has an ATA database and provides services to CRM; The Zimmerman Agency—a public relations agency; USIM—media management; Concept Farm—public relations agency; and IMI—experts of integrated market and social media.

Again, Aruba's Tourism Policy and Business Plan were the main focus of the discussions. The various agencies also gave presentations of their work on behalf of Aruba.

The agencies and other partners have a special passion for Aruba and particularly for Aruba's tourism. Among them are professionals such as Ed Malone (Interim Area Director North America), Michael Beaujon (Digital Marketing Manager), Ayerim Lacle (Business Development Manager North East), Kim Riddle (Business Development Manager US Secondary Markets), Colleen Lessard (Business Development Manager Canada), Angelina Buckley (Sales Manager), Jan Allen (Sales Manager) and Adwina Arends and Charly Ibarra (ATA Multi-Liner).

Weather Update Aruba



WEATHER: MOSTLY SUNNY WITH DRY ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE 31 CENTIGRADE / MINIMUM TEMPERATURE 25 CENTIGRADE.

SUNRISE 06:49 AM / SUNSET 04:51 PM.

WIND: MODERATE WINDS DIRECTION EAST AVERAGE 11 KNOTS WITH MAXIMUM OF 21 KNOTS.

GENERAL SITUATION: IN THE MID AND UPPERLEVELS, AIR IS STABLE AND DRY THIS WILL REMAIN THE SAME FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS. MOST OF THE RAINCLOUDS ARE PASSING TO THE NORTH OF OUR AREA. TRADEWINDS WILL REMAIN MODERATE THIS WEEK.

MARINE CONDITIONS: WAVE DIRECTION EAST-NORTHEAST WITH WAVEHEIGHT OF 4 TO 6 FEET.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WEEK: SKIES MOSTLY SUNNY. TRADEWINDS REMAIN MODERATE. TEMPERATURE IS FLUCTUATING AROUND NORMAL.

Early Bird Menu

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm



Appetizers: Stuffed Avocado, Escargots Bourguignon, (choose one) Fruits of the Seven Seas, Choices of Soups

Entrees: Breaded Grouper topped with coconut shrimps served with rice and vegetables

Land & Sea Chicken Breast, Steak & Shrimps with rice and vegetables

Breaded Chicken Breast served with mushroom sauce, topped with cheese served with vegetables and stuffed potato

Twin Tenderloin or Chicken Parmesan served on a bed of linguini pasta

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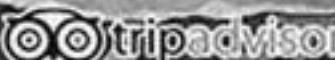
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Imagine this...

2 cars in just 2 days this is only possible at Crystal and Seaport casinos



ORANJESTAD -- Our Big 50 Campaign makes everyone excited, recently the players Maria Perotte and Sigfried Fraser were playing in Crystal and Seaport casino at the win a car machines and both became happy winners of a brand new Toyota Prius Hybrid. Yes Crystal and Seaport casino gave out 2 cars in only 2 days. Mrs Maria Perotte won a Toyota Prius Hybrid March 4th and Mr Sigfried Fraser won his March 6th.

The excitement just

started when confetti started falling and all the lights went on and the winner was known. Can you believe that Mr Sigfried Fraser hasn't won 1 car nor 2 cars but 3 cars in Crystal casino. The Toyota Prius's are on the move on the streets of Aruba demonstrating once again that Crystal and Seaport casinos are simple the best. Do you want to win a car?? Visit Crystal and Seaport casinos. You can walk into Crystal or Seaport casino and leave driving your Toyota prius.

Tourism grew by 6.65% in the month of February

ORANJESTAD -- The Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber recently announced that compared to February of 2013, this year's tourism grew by 6.65% in February 2014. In the month of February Aruba welcomed 78,979 visitors. In the first months of the year we saw an increase of 8.1%. Our primary market, the USA continued to show an increase in the number of visitors marking an increase of 5.2%.

Tourists from Latin America also showed an increase of 17.6% in February 2014 compared to February 2013.

Our second largest tourism market, Venezuela showed an increase of 19.3%, with the Colombia market showing an increase of 41.2%.

Likewise the European market also showed an increase of 9.9% with Holland presenting with a 5.7% increase in visitor arrivals to our island.

With respect to cruise tourism, there was a slight drop in tourism arrivals in February by 9.4% with a total of 41 calls.

The island expects to recover from this in the following months with Carnival

cruises increasing their calls by 14 additional calls to arrive at 44 calls this year. Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines will also be calling 8 more times with their Navigator of the Seas with 1000 passengers on Vision of the Seas.

Regarding monies left behind by tourists, according to the Central Bank, this was increased by 5.2% for a total of 1.984.9 million up to the third quarter of 2013.

The Minister of Tourism congratulated everyone who contributed to these great tourism results.

National Bird Count to be held on March 18

Where can you get your National Bird Count form?
Unda bo por busca bo formulario di e Conteo Nacional di Parha?

NATIONAL BIRD COUNT
what Aruba Birdlife Conservation is organizing the 3rd National Bird Count. Please go on the 18th of March and contribute to protect environment and the importance of our nature. We also want to thank the Aruba Birdlife Conservation for their support.

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National Bird Count 18-3-2014

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Biblioteca San Nicolas
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Fort Zoutman
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Botica Maria
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Bo conteo ta hopi importante! E Conteo Nacional di Parha ta tuma lugar 18 di Maart y ta tuma solamente 15 minuut di bo tempo.
Your count is very important! The National Bird Count will take place on March 18th and will only take 15 minutes of your time.
Bo por yuda haci un diferencia! You can help make a difference!

Dear Aruba Nature Lover,
On March 18th a National Bird Count will be held in Aruba. The count can take place anytime between 7 and 9 a.m. and only takes 15 minutes of your time.
Your help with carrying out the count is very important and highly appreciated.
You can help make a difference.
Thank you.
Greg Peterson - Aruba Birdlife Conservation

Minister of Finance applauds combining Green Conference and Europe Meets the Americas!

ORANJESTAD -- Minister of Finance, Juan David Yrausquin this past week publicly applauded the government's decision to combine the Green Conference and the Europe Meets the Americas Conference. This decision, according to Yrausquin will not only reduce the cost, but will also provide an impulse for the development of Aruba as a strategic hub between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean region.

The combined conference will bear the name, 'Green Aruba, where Europe Meets the Americas.' It will continue to be the commitment of the government of Aruba to achieve the third economic pillar for our island.

According to Yrausquin, this conference will be an important platform that the government has introduced to stimulate an interest in Aruba as a "Green Gateway" to serve as a trampoline between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Yrausquin indicated that for years many have been talking

about diversification of our economy, but no one has actually produced a vision of actions to make this concrete such as is the case now.

Latin America is an enormous market that is growing rapidly. Dutch companies and European companies want to grow their business by having a presence in Latin America and the Caribbean. Aruba as part of the Dutch Kingdom and the European Union can give these companies the opportunity to establish in well known territories and besides in the door of the growing markets. TNO, a pioneer in the practical application of advanced Technology was established on Aruba to do exactly this. TNO is also doing business with the Caribbean region and Latin America.

The "Green Aruba, where Europe Meets the Americas" will be a manner in which the government will impulse and proposition Aruba as the stepping plank between the two continents, facilitating and optimising the potential for success for companies.

Proceeds from the 3rd annual Ms. Canada Beach Volleyball

Continued from pg 2



Raffle winners: Alida Martinez (L); Diane Bikker (R)



Diane Bikker (R)



Sponsors and Volunteers

Ambiente Feliz, which provides a home and cares for mentally challenged adults, the National Washington Soccer Bond, a soccer group for island youth, Club Kibrahaca 60+, an activity and social center for the elderly. A check also went to the Aruba's Motorcycle Police

Unit for greatly needed equipment. Mrs. Begin had become well-acquainted with them during her first fundraising effort after paying for one of the officers to travel to Holland for some desperately needed reconstructive surgery, after being hurt while on the job.

"Ms. Canada" has partnered with Pro-Tec, a local cooling company to provide air-conditioning for Ambiente Feliz. National Washington Soccer Director Orlando Hoevertz will use the money to build a roof to shade the stands so parents can come and cheer on their youngsters, as well as greatly needed bathrooms. The funds will provide Kibrahaca with the seed money for a canteen for their clients to relax and socialize after handicraft and exercise classes.

Michelle spoke to each organization to find out what they needed and what would help them get started. She also arranged for all those using the funds for construction to receive a substantial discount on materials from Kooyman, a large do-it-your-

self home and hardware center on the island.

During the distribution of funds, two winners of the annual raffle were present to receive their prizes. Alida Martinez won a beautiful jewelry set donated by local shop Diamante and Diana Bikker was thrilled to win a 4 night/5 day stay at the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino. Other winners were Jonathan Looman of a diamond pendant from Queen's Jewelers in Oranjestad, Timmy Farro of a one-week stay at the Tropicana Resort, Branda Bowerman, won his/her watches donated by Michelle and Tony Bosch received a weekend stay at the Renaissance Resort.

Michelle expressed her sincere gratitude to all the island sponsors who supported

her efforts, including Tropical Bottling, Aruba Trading Company and Bryan Marchena who donated all printed materials.

In turn, Ernst Giel of the Aruba Tourism Authority was present to express the ATA's appreciation of Michelle's efforts to benefit local foundations, as well as the devotion of her and her husband Jean over the last 35 years, with Aruba being their premiere choice as a vacation destination. The Canadian couple were awarded the titles of "Ambassadors of Goodwill," as well as a newly-minted commemorative coin, which the ATA is just beginning to issue to dedicated visitors coming to the island for more than 30 years consecutively.



First place Trophy for Smit and Dorlas

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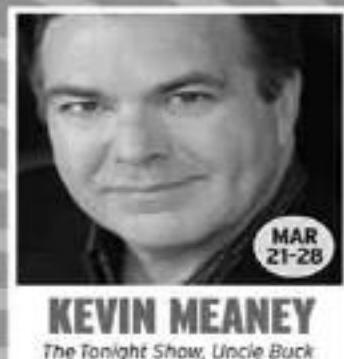
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NBC's The Today Show,
VH1's Best Week Ever, HGTV,
TRU TV's World's Dumbest



LENNY MARCUS
Late Show with David Letterman, Comedy Central, NBC, MTV



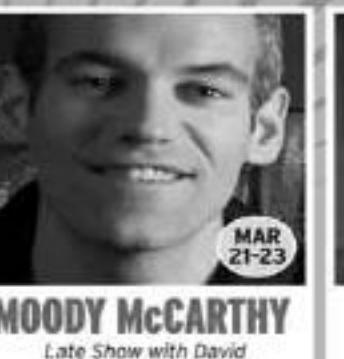
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Bachelet returns to power in Chile promising reform



Michelle Bachelet received the presidential sash from Senate President Isabel Allende

VALPARAISO (AFP) - Socialist Michelle Bachelet took the oath of office as president of Chile Tuesday, returning to power after four years with a reform agenda to reduce social disparities in this prosperous South American country.

The 62-year-old was sworn in at a solemn ceremony in the Congress that was charged with symbolism.

"Yes, I promise," she said as she took the oath from the new Senate leader Isabel Allende.

Allende, the daughter of ousted president Salvador Allende who died in a 1973 coup, handed Bachelet the presidential sash and fervently embraced the returning president.

"The historic image of two women simultaneously occupying the two highest positions of state will go around the world," Allende said earlier.

Gathered for the transfer of power were presidents from around the region as well as US Vice President Joe Biden.

Notably absent was Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, who cancelled at the last minute.

Five weeks of unrest in Venezuela, was to be taken

up Wednesday here at a meeting of South American foreign ministers.

Argentina's Cristina Kirchner, Brazil's Dilma Rousseff, Peru's Ollanta Humala, Mexico's Enrique Pena Nieto, Bolivia's Evo Morales, Ecuador's Rafael Correa and Uruguay's Jose Mujica were among the presidents attending.

Bachelet succeeds Sebastian Pinera, who said he was leaving his successor "a better country than the one we had four years ago."

Pinera, barred from running for a second consecutive term, is leaving office at the peak of his popularity.

- Promises of change -

Bachelet was Chile's first female president the first time she held the office, from 2006 to 2010.

In this second stint at the helm, she will have a chance to cement her legacy as a transformative leader who experienced firsthand the horrors of the 1973-1990 Augusto Pinochet military dictatorship.

During that dark period, Bachelet was tortured, fled the country, and then returned years later to work as a pediatrician, eventually entering politics.

Her father died after being tortured for remaining loyal to leftist president Salvador Allende in the 1973 coup that saw Pinochet come to power.

She returned to Chile last year after three years in New York, where she headed UN Women, and defeated conservative Evelyn Matthei in December elections with 62 percent of the vote.

During the intense campaign, she promised to launch major reforms of Chile's education system, its taxes and write a new constitution that wipes away vestiges of the Pinochet dictatorship.

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West must act to stop Crimea annexation: Klitschko aide

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Western nations -- especially the EU -- must act to stop Russia annexing Crimea, which would deal a serious blow to Europe's security, a top advisor to Ukrainian presidential hopeful Vitali Klitschko said Tuesday.

"The West should act now without any procrastination," said Oleh Shamshur, a former deputy foreign minister and ex-ambassador to the US.

"If Crimea is annexed by Russia, the post Cold War system architecture for the European security is gone in flames," he told the German Marshall Fund think tank in Washington.

He was speaking on the eve of a visit by Ukraine's interim Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, who will hold meetings at the White House

Wednesday in a strong show of support for the new leaders in Kiev amid a US-Russia showdown over the fate of their country.

"The forces of Putin have to be stopped. It is still possible, but time is running out. I would like to save it," said Shamshur, the foreign policy advisor to former world boxing champion Klitschko.

Klitschko was a leading figure in the protests that forced out Ukraine's pro-Russian former president, Viktor Yanukovych, and has announced he will run for the Ukrainian presidency in elections scheduled for May 25.

Shamshur accused the United States and Europe of being too slow to act over the mounting crisis in Ukraine, in which Russia has deployed thousands of troops into Crimea, which is preparing to

vote on Sunday on whether to break away from Kiev.

"Lack of action... would be a terrible signal all over the world," he said.

"No country in Europe, especially those countries issued from the former Soviet Union, can really feel safe."

He urged the US and its allies to table a UN Security Council motion against Moscow, saying even if Russia used its veto to shoot it down, it would still send a powerful message.

"I think the basic strategy on restraint is the right one, but there are some measures which I think we can do. The borders with Russia should be shut down altogether and definitely mobilization should not have been partial, but should be total," he argued.

REMEMBER
to

Buckle up

Japan marks 3rd anniversary of quake-tsunami disaster



NAMIE (AFP) - Japan observed a moment of silence Tuesday to mark the third anniversary of the quake-tsunami disaster which swept away thousands of victims, destroyed coastal communities, and sparked the nuclear emergency that forced a re-think on atomic power.

Survivors bowed deeply and joined hands at remembrance ceremonies in towns and cities around the disaster zone and in Tokyo, where Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko led tributes to those who died in Japan's worst peace-time disaster.

A national moment of silence followed the cry of tsunami alarm sirens, the moment a 9.0-magnitude under-sea quake hit.

Its raw force unleashed a towering wall of water that travelled at the speed of a jet plane to the coast. Within minutes, communities were turned to matchwood, and whole families drowned.

Giant waves also crashed into the Fukushima nuclear plant, sparking reactor meltdowns and explosions, and setting off the worst atomic crisis in a generation.

The crippled plant remains volatile and the complicated decommissioning process is expected to last for decades, as fears persist over the health effects of leaked radiation. Tens of thousands were evacuated from the stricken area.

As night fell, an event in a Fukushima park saw about 2,000 lit candles arranged to

read "Fukushima 3/11".

In Tokyo, Emperor Akihito paid tribute to victims killed in the tragedy, and those struggling in its aftermath.

"Many still lead difficult lives in devastated areas and places that were evacuated," he said. "I pray for a return of peaceful times."

Although no one died as a direct result of Fukushima, about 1,650 area residents passed away from complications related to stress and other problems following the accident.

A total of 15,884 people are confirmed to have died in the tsunami with another 2,633 still listed as missing. Human remains are sometimes still found years later.

Despite the government pledging billions of dollars in reconstruction aid, progress in disaster-hit regions has been slow, some communities remain ghost towns, and thousands of disaster refugees struggle to cope.

Among almost 270,000 evacuees from the tsunami and Fukushima, about 100,000 are in temporary housing while others found shelter in new cities or with relatives. Japan has so far built only 3.5 percent of the new homes promised to disaster refugees in heavily affected Iwate and Miyagi prefectures.

Spain mourns Madrid train bomb victims, 10 years on



MADRID (AFP) - Dressed in mourning black, Spaniards commemorated Tuesday their country's deadliest peacetime attack, a decade to the day since Al-Qaeda-inspired bombers blew up four packed commuter trains and killed 191 people. Relatives of those killed on the trains, which were carrying rush hour passengers from Madrid's suburbs when they exploded on March 11, 2004, wept quietly as the names and ages of the victims were read out at the city's main Atocha railway station. Earlier, victims' relatives and officials filled the pews in the city's Almudena Cathedral for a memorial mass, amid doleful organ music and incense smoke. King Juan Carlos embraced leaders of victims' associations at the cathedral door. The archbishop of Madrid, Antonio María Rouco Varela, told the congregation that the victims "died and suffered, and we suffer, because there were some who with blood-curdling premeditation were willing to kill innocent people". After the attacks, however, "love triumphed over hate and life over death", as Spain rallied round to help the victims, he added.



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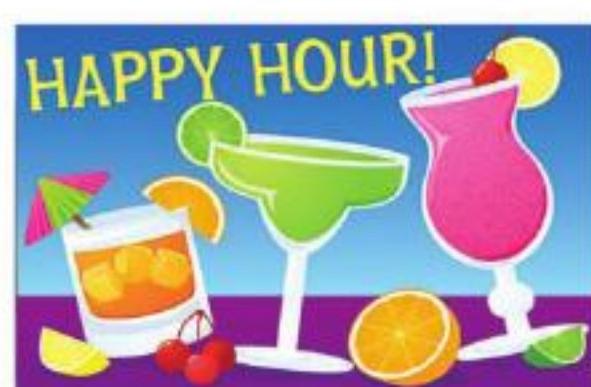
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EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

Obama takes satirical hit to chin to sell health care

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama is trying a new strategy in his struggle to sell his stumbling health care law -- self-parody.

Obama ventured onto the spoof online comedy show "Between Two Ferns" in which host and "Hangover" star Zach Galifianakis grills showbiz luminaries with embarrassing questions.

"What's it like to be the last black president," Galifianakis asked Obama in the show, which debuted on the "Funny or Die" website on Tuesday.

"What's it like for this to be the last time you ever talk to a president," Obama hit back.

Galifianakis, spoofing low budget television interview shows, also jabbed Obama over "ambassador" Dennis Rodman's trips to North Korea and ribbed him over his "home country" of Kenya.

Obama, a slick political performer, had his dead pan delivery down pat, and showed some sharp comic timing -- though the show seemed more



scripted than previous episodes featuring Hollywood stars like Natalie Portman and Charlize Theron.

For the president, the point of the exercise was to reach a youthful audience since the health care law depends on healthy, young Americans to sign up to subsidize care for the sick and elderly.

"You can get affordable health care. Most young Americans right now, they are not covered. They can get covered for what it costs to pay their cell phone bill," Obama said.

The Obama administration is in full sales mode on the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, ahead of a sign-up deadline on March 31.

The rollout to the plan, the centerpiece of Obama's domestic political legacy, was hampered by a faulty sign-up website.

The administration contends that after a slow start, the number of people signing up is now speeding up and will, as expected, peak in the final days before the deadline.

But Republicans, who want to repeal the law, crow over news of every reverse for Obamacare, and complain that Obama has infringed his powers by delaying several key aspects of the law.

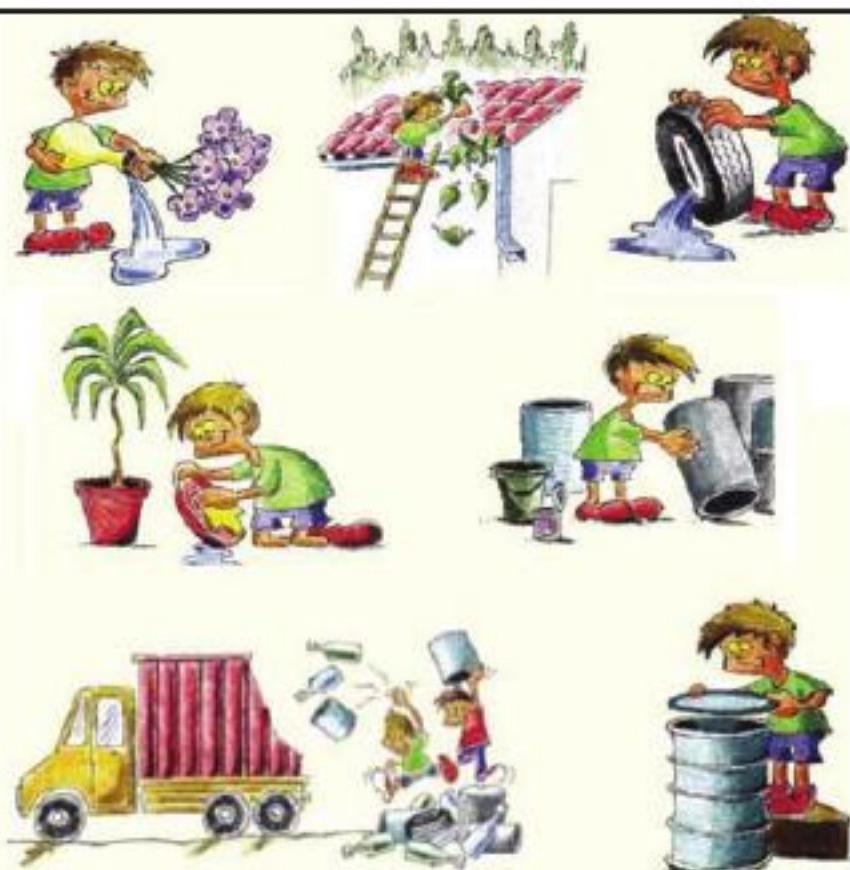
The reform was also hit by Obama's now discredited pledge that if Americans wanted to keep their existing medical plans, they could.

Last week, the administration said that insurers could continue to market health care plans that do not meet the minimum standards of the new law until October 1, 2016.

Republicans slammed the move as a crass political maneuver to spare Democrats from embarrassment in November's mid-term elections.

According to latest figures through January, more than 3.3 million Americans have signed up for new insurance plans under the reform.

Let's Be Dengue Free



Argentina weighs plastic surgery ban for minors



BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Lawmakers in Argentina are considering a bill that would ban plastic surgery for patients under the age of 18.

The measure aims to stem the popularity of cosmetic surgery among Argentina's youth, in a beauty-obsessed nation where the popularity of such procedures has seen a dramatic rise in recent years.

The bill's author, lawmaker Mara Brawer, said teens are more susceptible to societal messages that make it difficult to accept physical imperfections.

They are also at greater risk than adults from the physical and emotional problems that can occur after plastic surgery, she said.

An exception to the ban on plastic surgery would be granted to youths seeking procedures to correct physical deformities, said a text of the draft measure, which was formally introduced in the legis-

lature late Monday.

Whether to enhance the bustline or the buttocks, the popularity of plastic surgery procedures is at an all time high in Argentina, registering a stunning five-fold increase in the past four years, according to industry data.

Officials said there are no hard statistics on what percentage of the industry's growth is a result of plastic surgeries by teens.

Some of the growth, however, represents rising demand from foreigners traveling to Argentina for cosmetic surgery -- a burgeoning area of medical tourism.

The elective procedures are far from risk-free: a former Miss Argentina, Solange Magnano, died in November 2009 of complications from cosmetic surgery.

In a highly publicized case, Magnano died from a pulmonary embolism following buttock implant surgery.

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Briefs:

BALTIMORE (AFP) - Aspiring cheerleaders practice their moves during the first day of the Baltimore Ravens tryouts at a gym in Baltimore, Maryland. The Ravens has the only co-ed cheer team in the NFL and is the only one to perform stunts.



TEL AVIV (AFP) - Models presents creations by Israeli designer Dorin Frankfurt during the Tel Aviv Fashion Week, on March 11, 2014 in the Mediterranean coastal city of Tel Aviv.

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BEST PRICES ON THE ISLAND

Lego to build on movie success, tackle globalisation challenge

BILLUND (AFP) - With record sales and a hit movie expected to propel them further, Lego could be expected to bask in its successful turnaround, but the Danish maker of colourful toy blocks is pressing ahead to face the challenges of globalisation.

Last month, the world's second largest toymaker reported a nine percent rise in annual net profit to 6.12 billion kroner (820 million euros, \$1.12 billion). The 10-percent increase in sales to 25.38 billion kroner marked a quadrupling in just 10 years.

By contrast, the traditional toy market is expected to grow marginally or not at all as it loses sales to video games.

The performance is even more remarkable since just a decade ago the company was on the ropes, posting massive losses and laying off thousands of workers.

When Joergen Vig Knudstorp took the helm in 2004, vulture capitalists were circling the ailing company, into which Lego heir Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen had just injected 800 million kroner of his own money.

"There was an emphasis on stretching the brand and moving into adjacent businesses. Apparel, theme parks, a lot of consumer electronics and so on," Vig Knudstorp told AFP in an interview.



The ideas weren't necessarily bad -- sales were rising -- but they weren't a good match with Lego, which failed to make them profitable. It also lost focus on the original toy operation, where revenues plunged.

In addition to spreading it self too thin, Lego had failed to adapt to consumers' shift away from local "mom and pop" stores to big-box retailers like Wal-Mart and Toys'R'Us.

The first chief executive from outside the founding Kirk Christiansen family overhauled the supply chain and withdrew from high-cost manufacturing locations such as Switzerland in favour of "mid-cost" countries like Hungary and the Czech Republic.

The Legoland theme parks were spun off and merged with Merlin Entertainment, the private-equity backed owner of Madame Tussauds.

"We decided to only do the core business and leave these

adjacent businesses to other operators and earn a licensing income," Knudstorp said.

"The Lego Movie", a smash-hit animated film that has won over both audiences and critics, is a case in point of how the group is profiting from letting other companies use its brand.

A Warner Brothers team spent five years immersing itself in the company's culture before the movie hit the screens.

"We gave (Warner Brothers) very broad artistic degrees of freedom because we think it's so crucial that when you take a risk you also be able to make decisions," said Knudstorp.

Many Lego fans still build "freestyle" and post video clips of their creations on YouTube, where the company boasts 7.5 billion viewings, 99 percent of which are user generated and, according to the group, putting it in the top three of all brands on the video sharing site.

Flappy Bird may rise again, creator says

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Vietnamese creator of Flappy Bird says he's thinking of resurrecting the smash-hit free game that he abruptly took offline a month ago -- albeit with a warning about its addictive qualities.

In his first interview since he pulled the app from the Apple and Android app stores, citing the pressure its success put on his "simple life," Nguyen Ha Dong told Rolling Stone magazine he now feels a sense of "relief."

But asked if Flappy Bird will ever fly again on mobile devices, Nguyen responded: "I'm considering it."

While he is not working on a new version, he said any sequel would come with a warning to users to "please take a break."

With its 2D retro-style graphics, Flappy Bird -- in which gamers try to direct a flying bird between oncoming sets of pipes without touching them -- was wildly popular.

When Nguyen, 28, announced on Twitter that he was about to take it down, 10 million people downloaded it in just 22 hours -- and one month on, clone versions still pop up.

Nguyen told Rolling Stone he was upset not only by the fame that surrounded his Flappy Bird success, but also



by messages from people telling him how the game caused them to flunk exams and lose jobs.

Now enjoying a quieter life, he told Rolling Stone he is busy creating other games, including a cowboy-themed shooter, a vertical flying game and an "action chess game" -- one of which he will release this month.

Vietnam has a small but thriving software and games development sector and the global publicity surrounding Flappy Bird is likely to help it grow, technology experts have said.

Rolling Stone posted its interview with Nguyen on its website Tuesday ahead of publication in its March 27 issue.



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Japan stem cell scientist calls for retraction of study

TOKYO (AFP) - A co-author of a Japanese study that promised a revolutionary way to create stem cells has called for the headline-grabbing research to be retracted over claims its data was faulty.

The findings, published by Japanese researcher Haruko Obokata and US-based scientists, outlined a simple and low-tech approach in the quest to grow transplant tissue in the lab.

The study was touted as the third great advance in stem cells -- a futuristic field that aims to reverse Alzheimer's, cancer and other crippling or lethal diseases.

But it faced hard questions as the Japan-based Riken institute, which sponsored the study, launched a probe last month over the credibility of data used in the explosive findings.



At issue are allegations that researchers used erroneous image data for an article published in the January edition of British journal Nature.

Teruhiko Wakayama, a Yamanashi University professor who co-authored the article, called for a retraction.

"It's hard to believe the findings anymore after so many mistakes in the data," he told broadcaster Nippon Television late Monday.

On Tuesday, the institute said it was mulling whether to pull back the study.

But Hitoshi Niwa, who also contributed to the article, dismissed what he described as minor mistakes, Japanese media reported.

Another co-author, Charles Vacanti, a tissue engineer at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, told the Wall Street Journal: "It would be very sad to have such an important paper retracted as a result of peer pressure, when indeed the data and conclusions are honest and valid."

Harvard is also investigating, reports said.

Hakubun Shimomura, the Japanese minister in charge of science and education, said Tuesday that the study should be retracted now and re-published if "they accumulate new facts" that prove its authenticity.

Called stimulus-triggered acquisition of pluripotency (STAP) cells, the innovation was touted as breaking new ground, supplying a lower-cost and relatively straightforward technique.

Stem cells are primitive cells that, as they grow, become differentiated into the

various specialised cells that make up the different organs -- the brain, the heart, kidney and so on.

The goal is to create stem cells in the lab and nudge them to grow into these differentiated cells, thus replenishing organs damaged by disease or accident.

The researchers' groundbreaking findings said that white blood cells in newborn mice were returned to a versatile state through a relatively simple process that involved incubating them in a highly acidic solution for 25 minutes, followed by a five-minute spin in a centrifuge and week-long immersion in a growth culture.

Until now, only plant cells, and not mammal cells, have been found to reprogramme back to a youthful state through simple environmental factors.

A key obstacle in the field is ensuring that transplanted cells are not attacked as alien by the body's immune system -- meaning they would have to carry a patient's own genetic code to identify them as friendly.

In 1998 came the first gain: the use of cloning technology -- pioneered with Dolly the sheep -- to harvest stem cells from early-stage embryos grown from the donor's own DNA.

But these "pluripotent" stem cells are controversial as the method entails destroying the embryo, something opposed by religious conservatives and others.

In 2006, a team led by Shinya Yamanaka of Kyoto University, who was a co-recipient of the 2012 Nobel Prize for Medicine, created so-called induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS).

The team took mature cells and coded them with four genes, "rewinding" the cells' genetic programmes to return them to a juvenile state.

The technique had to overcome an early hurdle of causing tumours in cells and still faces efficiency problems -- less than one percent of adult cells are typically reprogrammed successfully.

Spinach extract could help prevent obesity, study shows



STOCKHOLM (AFP) - A natural compound hidden away in spinach has been shown to reduce food cravings between meals and could help prevent obesity, a Swedish scientist said. Charlotte Erlanson-Albertsson, a professor of appetite regulation at Lund University, found the compound, known as thylakoid, while looking for ways to slow digestion and alleviate hunger pangs. The compound functions differently to processed foods, which tend to be digested only in the upper intestine. This prevents key hormones that make us feel full from being released to the brain, according to a statement from the university. A test group of 15 people who took the compound every morning reported that it had become easier to resist the temptation to eat between meals. Erlanson-Albertsson discovered the compound after speaking to her husband, a scientist researching photosynthesis. He steered her in the direction of thylakoids, a compound in green leaves believed to slow down fat digestion, meaning the whole intestine has time to get involved, the university said. But eating spinach itself is not enough. It has to be crushed, filtrated and passed through a centrifuge, freeing the thylakoids from the plant's cells.

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Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	3.00
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	204.03
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	249.15
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.48
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	33.62
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	30.49
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Brazil to build own aircraft carrier: defense minister

BRASÍLIA (AFP) - Brazil is planning to build its first aircraft carrier to replace its aging only model as part of a steady upgrade to its armed forces, Defense Minister Celso Amorim said Tuesday.

In recent years Brazil has purchased submarines, helicopters and supersonic aircraft via technology transfer agreements with the proviso that the hardware is made in Brazil.

Brazil commissioned its only current aircraft carrier, the Clemenceau class State of São Paulo, in 2000, though the French initially launched the vessel back in 1960.

In December, Brasilia agreed to purchase 36 Gripen

NG fighter jets from Swedish firm Saab with Amorim stressing the Swedish-Brazilian nature of that project through a "real technology transfer."

Amorim said he would visit Sweden in early April to "discuss the details" of that contract, valued at a reported \$4.5 billion, and also to determine if the Swedes can lend some Gripen until those from the deal are delivered from 2018.

The Swedes saw off competition from US giant Boeing and Dassault of France in order to land the deal and defense sources say Brazil may ultimately order as many as 160 Gripen NG by 2030.

Japan offers Tunisia 335 mn euros in loans

TUNIS (AFP) - Japan plans to provide Tunisia with two loans worth 335 million euros (\$465 million) to support the country's "democratisation," Senior Vice Foreign Minister Nabuo Kishi said Tuesday during a visit to Tunis.

One loan will finance construction of an electrical power

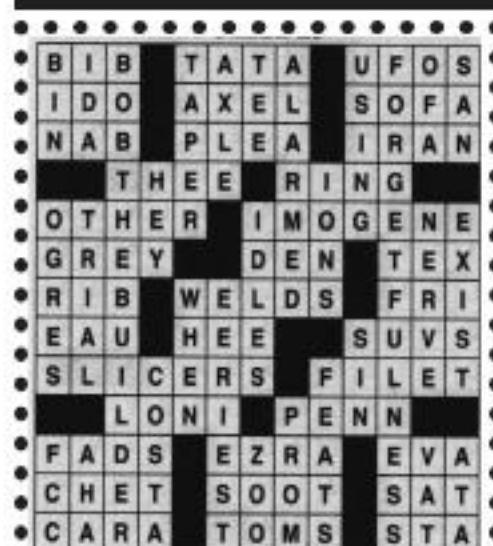
plant in Rades, south of the capital, while the other will be for a project to prevent flooding by Tunisia's biggest river, the Oued Medjerda, the Japanese embassy said in a statement.

The loans, with an annual interest rate of only 0.6 percent, will be repayable over 40 years, with a 10-year grace period.

Kishi said Japan planned to increase bilateral cooperation to support "all of Tunisia's political, economic and cultural efforts" and hoped to "contribute to the success of democratisation" in the country.

Tunisia's economy has stagnated since the 2011 popular uprising that ousted a decades-old dictatorship, with social unrest and a jihadist-related violence discouraging investment, domestic and foreign, and hampering economic reforms call for by international financial institutions.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer



Puerto Rico dodges debt bullet

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Debt-laden Puerto Rico successfully issued \$3.5 billion worth of bonds Tuesday in an effort to stave off default long enough for the US territory to right its finances.

But the fresh fundraising came at a high cost, with the bonds sold at a yield of 8.727 percent, reflecting market concerns the Caribbean island will still struggle to turn around its situation.

The Government Development Bank said it had increased the offering by \$500 million due to strong demand, with bids from investors totaling \$16 billion.

According to reports, hedge funds were prominent among buyers while traditional funds investing in such municipal bonds stayed away after Puerto Rico's credit grade was slashed last month to "junk" status by the major rating agencies.



The yield on the new issue was roughly double that of investment-grade municipal bonds.

The government will use the \$3.2 billion in net proceeds from the bond issue mainly to refinance short-term debt, which will help it better manage its finances and simplify the structure of its debt.

The bond sale came after the government pledged further targeted spending cuts to pare its huge deficit, without undermining efforts to restore growth after the economy contracted for seven years

straight. During that period, Puerto Rico took advantage of strong demand for its tax-free bonds to raise funds to turn the economy around, but without success.

The bankruptcy declaration of another major municipal bond issuer, the city of Detroit, sent shivers through bond markets and support for Puerto Rico all but dried up.

The Government Development Bank said the fresh funds would meet the territory's near-term liquidity needs, allowing it to pursue the reforms needed for the longer term.

Alejandro García Padilla, governor of the island, called the bond sale "a clear message of the investors' confidence" in his plans to turn around the economy, as well as efforts to boost transparency around the government's use of the funds it raises.

Migrants more likely to be jobless and living in poverty

THE HAGUE - The unemployment rate among Dutch people with an ethnic minority background is more than triple that of the white Dutch, according to a new report by the government's socio-cultural think tank SCP.

Hardest hit are youngsters of Moroccan origin who left school without any qualifications - more than half of them are without a job.

People with a minority background are more likely to be out of work than the native Dutch even if they have the same qualifications, the SCP report shows. This is probably due to preconceptions on the part of employers, the SCP

says.

For example, 20% of 'non-western' youngsters with a trade school qualification are out of work, compared with 5% of the white Dutch. Two-thirds of those with a job are on a flexible contact.

People who moved to the Netherlands as refugees are most likely to live on welfare benefits (bijstand). Half of Somali refugees, for example, claim welfare.

One in seven adults and one in four children with a 'non-western' background live in poverty, the report says.

Social affairs minister Lodewijk Asscher said later on Tuesday the picture painted

by the report is 'dramatic'.

Too many minority youths are still leaving school without qualifications and too many companies are discriminating when taking on staff, Nos television quoted the minister as saying.

However, solutions are in place which give hope, he said. A growing number of these youngsters are better educated and a programme to cut the number leaving school early has already increased the number achieving a diploma.

Asscher promised to soon publish a 'tough package of measures' to tackle discrimination at work, especially during the recruitment process.

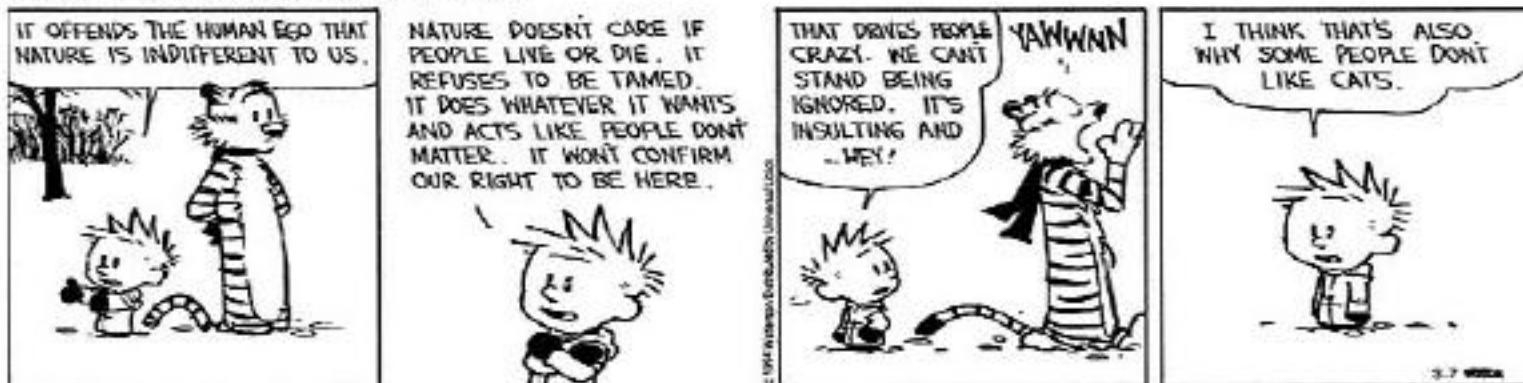


HYDERABAD (AFP) - Indian groundstaff move a Cessna N79XL aircraft to be parked on display at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad on March 11, 2014, ahead of The India Aviation 2014 show. The fourth India Aviation show, a five-day event scheduled to run from March 12-16, will see more than 250 exhibitors showcase the latest global aerospace technology.

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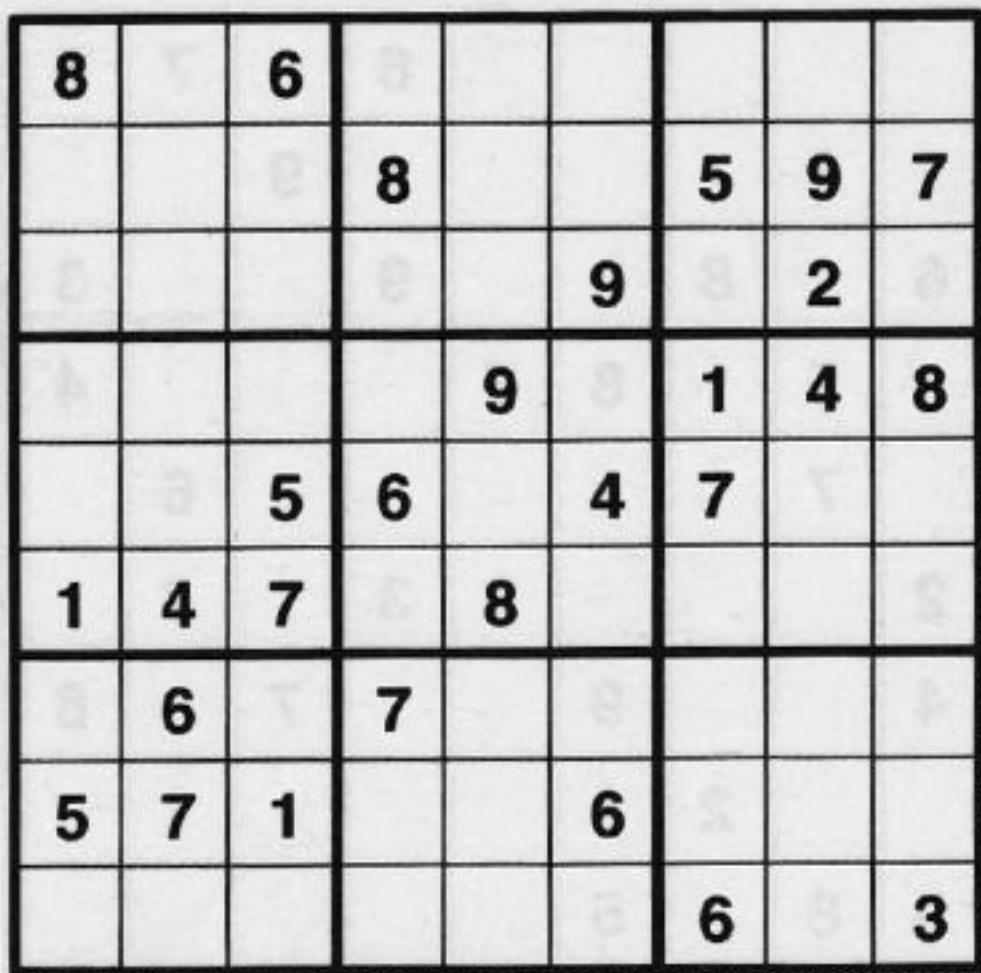
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6	7	1	4	3	9	2	8	9
3	6	9	7	2	8	4	5	1
1	4	7	3	8	6	9	5	2
9	5	6	1	4	7	3	2	8
6	3	2	5	9	1	4	8	7
7	5	3	1	4	9	8	2	6
8	9	6	3	5	7	1	4	8
2	1	4	6	8	3	5	9	7

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they feel secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the ac-



tion, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba con-

tributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area also to house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great

demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property, not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas, 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Discover authentic Aruban cuisine at The Queen's



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The "hipper" and elegant new digs offer beautiful views, but Mama Luisa's magical touch in the kitchen is what



first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. She can be counted on to be conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations. As Varella says, "My mom loves and lives to cook. Even when she is not at work in the restaurant, she is experimenting with new dishes all day at home."

She is the Queen of the Kitchen."

Be sure to try Luisa's acclaimed "Carni Stoba di Ma-

machi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," or their fresh, whole snapper, with Mama Luisa's delectable salsa criollo. Don't miss the specialty of the house, a favorite local delicacy, Keshi Yena - "Filled Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all encased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It is satisfying and particularly memorable. Regional side dishes and some of Mama's secret recipe prepara-



Mama Luisa hard at work in the kitchen

tion of banana hasa and creamy potatoes provide a deliciously picturesque meal.

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to go, reasonably priced and easily accessible. A full menu can be seen on their website, <http://www.thequeensaruba.com/>

Aside from an extensive regular menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season, and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't be shy about asking for something that may not be on the menu, as they are always eager to please.

The Queen's is open daily from 3:00 pm - 11:00 pm, offering both indoor and outdoor dining. telf. 5860606.

Football: Pele confident Brazil will deliver on and off field

PARIS (AFP) - The hosting of the 2014 World Cup is "a great opportunity" for Brazil, the country's all-time great Pele told AFP in an exclusive interview on Sunday.

Pele revealed his confidence that the tournament will be a memorable one for all the right reasons while also backing Luiz Felipe Scolari's Brazil team to handle the huge pressure of being hosts.

Brazil's organisation of the World Cup has been marred by negative headlines about the struggle to get some of the 12 stadiums finished on time.

The threat of violent street demonstrations of the sort that overshadowed last year's Confederations Cup has added to the tension, but Pele believes Brazil will get it right.

"This is a great opportunity. It will be fantastic for Brazil," he said.

"I think after we had the experience of the Confederations Cup the government has been better organised for the World Cup. So I hope we will have an excellent World Cup. We deserve it."

"As a Brazilian I feel sorry because you have two or three big opportunities to showcase the country -- the Confederations Cup, the World Cup and the Olympic Games (in Rio de Janeiro in 2016). I think this will be a great opportunity to show the country, to make money, to get tourism."

"And it's important that the demonstrations do not damage everything, so we are going to work hard."

Winner of the World Cup three times, in 1958, 1962 and 1970, Pele says the one tournament that left its mark on him more than any other was the 1966 competition in England, when he was kicked off the park and Brazil bowed out at the group stage.

- Pressure on Neymar -

At least he is not associated with Brazil's greatest failure -- their defeat to Uruguay in the deciding game in 1950, the last time the country hosted the tournament.

In contrast, Pele's childhood idol Zizinho was part of that team and became a symbol of the 2-1 loss which traumatised the huge country.

The pressure on Scolari's team to deliver this time on home soil is enormous, and Barcelona star Neymar, just 22, carries the hopes of a nation more than any other.

Pele, who was just 17 when he rose to international prominence at the 1958 World Cup in Sweden, admits that the fear



of failure this time around is massive.

"This is Neymar's first World Cup and nobody knows exactly what is going to happen. It is a big responsibility for him," said Pele who was speaking to AFP as the Coca-Cola FIFA World Cup trophy tour stopped off in Paris.

"But the best thing for Neymar was to come to play in Spain, to play in Europe, the best thing for Brazil. It was like him going off to university for six months and then coming back to play with Brazil, because then they come with more experience. That was fantastic for him."

"The problem of pressure is not only a problem for Neymar. It is a problem for the whole team, no doubt. Of course, the country, the people, they want to win."

"In Brazil we had one bad experience -- in 1950 when we played the World Cup in Brazil and lost to Uruguay. Now the people are afraid of the same

thing happening. But I think it will be different now."

Pele, who earned his nickname 'O Rei' (The King) after scoring a hat-trick against France in the 1958 semi-finals, brackets the Selecao among the favourites, but sees Chile as potential dark horses in the tournament, which gets underway on June 12.

"We have two or three teams who right now, three months before the World Cup, we can say are very good. I'm thinking of Germany, because I have seen them play many times; Spain, because they have had the same team for eight years, and of course Brazil."

"But you must respect Italy, and in South America Chile is the best team today. The World Cup is always a box of surprises."

Brazil, who will come up against Croatia, Mexico and Cameroon in Group A, could potentially meet Chile -- who are in Group B -- in the last 16.



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Football: Bayern advance, but Arsenal earn draw in Munich

MUNICH (AFP) - Holders Bayern Munich booked their place in the Champions League's quarter-finals, despite Arsenal earning a 1-1 draw in Bavaria in Tuesday's last 16, second-leg clash. A second-half Bastian Schweinsteiger goal gave Bayern a brief lead before Arsenal's Lukas Podolski equalised with a thunderbolt of a shot as the tie finished 3-1 on aggregate. Arsenal, who also went out at the same stage of the competition to the same opponents last season, failed to overturn their 2-0 deficit from the first leg three weeks ago. But midfielder Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain told ITV they could be proud of their performance in Munich. Amidst hopes of repeating last season's shock 2-0 win in Munich, Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger made six changes from the team which lost to Bayern in London. Lukasz Fabianski was named in goal for the suspended Wojciech Szczesny, who was sent off in the first-leg. There were only six of the seven permitted replacements named amidst reports Japan's Ryo Miyaichi flew to Germany despite being ineligible for the Champions League's knock-out stages. Bayern coach Pep Guardiola made three changes from the first leg, switching from a 4-1-4-1 in London to the 4-2-3-1 formation used in last season's European final. Bayern got off a bad start when centre-back Dante was booked for a clumsy challenge on Oxlade-Chamberlain after only eight minutes. It was his third of Bayern's European campaign and means he is suspended for the quarter-final first-leg. Spain's Javi Martinez had a goal disallowed for offside after 27 minutes, while at the other end Bayern's Manuel Neuer saved Olivier Giroud's header. It stayed goalless at the break even though Bayern enjoyed their customary 70 percent possession. Wenger made a key change for the second-half as Mesut Ozil, who had hamstring trouble, made way for Tomas Rosicky in the attacking midfield role. It marked a miserable two legs for the off-form Ozil, who apologised to Gunners fans via Facebook after failing to convert a key penalty in the first-leg. Soon after the break referee Svein Oddvar Moen ignored Bayern's penalty appeals when Robben went down in the area just before the opening goal. Ribery found space on the left and crossed inside to Schweinsteiger, playing his first Champions League game since November, to drill home on 55 minutes. The lead lasted just two minutes as Podolski robbed Lahm and fired home from a tight angle giving Manuel Neuer no chance. There was drama in added time as Bayern replacement Thomas Mueller had a penalty attempt saved by Fabianski after Robben was fouled by centre-back Laurent Koscielny. The result was welcome news in a dark week for the Bavarian giants. The Allianz Arena clash was played against the backdrop of the court case against Bayern president Uli Hoeness, which started Monday. The 1974 World Cup winner is fighting to avoid a jail term and stands accused of having dodged 27.2 million euros (\$37.6 million) in taxes by hiding his wealth in Swiss bank accounts. A verdict is expected on Thursday and major tax fraud carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in Germany.



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NFL: Cowboys drop Ware, Browns sign two in rebuild bid

DALLAS (AFP) - The Dallas Cowboys released team all-time sacks leader DeMarcus Ware while the Cleveland Browns signed two key players in their rebuilding effort as National Football League free agency began Tuesday.

The first major exit of the period when players seek hefty contracts with new clubs came when Dallas parted ways with linebacker Ware after nine seasons in which he made 117 sacks.

But the move saved the Cowboys \$16 million under the NFL salary cap for the 2014 season and another \$7 million off the Dallas salary limit for 2015.

Ware, 31, had 547 tackles and two interceptions with the Cowboys and his 20 quarterback sacks in 2008 was a one-season Dallas record. In 2013, Ware had 58 tackles and eight sacks despite missing three early season games with a quadricep strain.

At Cleveland, Browns general manager Ray Farmer agreed on deals with veteran safety Donte Whitner, who returns to his hometown, and linebacker Karlos Dansby.

Whitner agreed to a four-year deal worth \$28 million while Dansby agreed to a four-year deal worth \$24 million with \$14 million guaranteed.

Whitner, a starter for San Francisco the past three seasons, will replace T.J. Ward, who signed with Denver.

Dansby, formerly with Arizona, made 122 tackles with 6.5 sacks and four interceptions.

NEW YORK (AFP) - Phil Jackson, who has won a record 11 NBA titles as a coach, is near to concluding a deal to become the New York Knicks basketball operations boss, ESPN reported Tuesday.

The US-based sports news network, citing unnamed sources, said the Knicks were confident they would have final details sorted out this week and an announcement of a deal by next week.

Jackson, 68, retired as a coach in May of 2011 after having guided the Chicago Bulls to six NBA titles in the 1990s and the Los Angeles Lakers to five NBA crowns from 2000-2010.

Jackson would replace Steve Mills, who was named president and general manager of the Knicks last September.

The team also has superstar Carmelo Anthony looking at free agency after this season, although having Jackson in the fold could entice talent to the Knicks that might have had second thoughts given their struggles this season.

Jackson played for the Knicks from 1967-1978 and helped the team win its most recent NBA crown in 1973.

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Aruba to host Carifta 2014!

ORANJESTAD - In a month from now Aruba will be host to the magna sporting event, Carifta 2014.

This will be swimming, synchronized swimming and Open Water swimming to take place here on Aruba. The event is scheduled to be held in the Roly Bisslik Pool in Savaneta. The Arubaanse Zwembond is preparing diligently to receive some 500 athletes from 17 participating countries from the Caribbean area.

This will be the fifth time that Aruba was chosen as the site for this magna swimming event. The last two events of Carifta were in 2008 and 2009, and were great successes. This event this year will take place on the 22nd to the 26th of April.

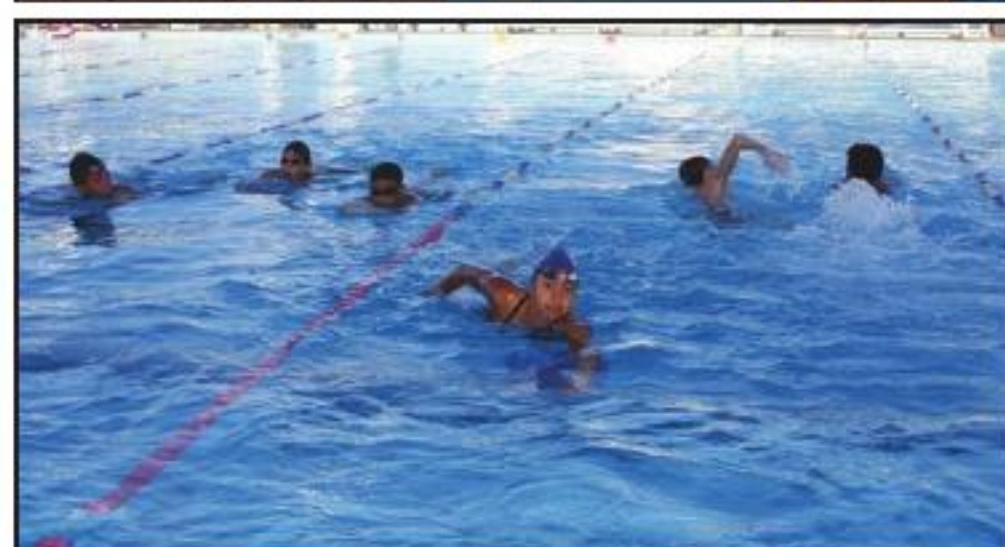
In last year's competition held in Jamaica, the Aruba delegation was number one among the Caribbean islands. A total of 48 medals were obtained putting Aruba in third place.

With this year's competition to be held here at home, there is a great deal of pressure to win at least 50 medals.

Our athletes will be swimming this weekend March 14th in an effort to classify for Carifta. After the weekend the



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Coaches, Technical Commission and the Board will finalize Team Aruba. Carifta 2014 will be a Final Qualifying event for Youth Olympic Games and a classifying event for the CAC Games. These are two big events for 2014. Hence, Aruba and the other islands will have athletes who will try to classify during Carifta 2014.

Special thanks was extended to the sponsors, the government of Aruba, the Subsidy Commission, Caribbean Mercantile Bank, Aruba Airport Authority, Lotto and Subway. Special mention was made for the sacrifice and work

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Brazil Taekwondo preparing for Hymn and Anthem Day Championship!

ORANJESTAD - Last Saturday the Tran Hard Fight Smart team of the Brazil Taekwondo Foundation head off to Grape Field for rigorous training run from Grape Field to the entrance of Parke Arikok at Fontein... a more than 6.2kilometres stretch.

Clifford Rasmijn began the warm up at Grape Field after which the team headed off to the direction of the wind mills. With the bus they were returned to Grape Field where the training continued.

Rasmijn emphasized the internal aspect of the training. It was obvious that the team had made considerable progress compared to the last time they trained at Grape Field. This means that the team is on the right track.

Next month the Brazil Taekwondo Foundation is organizing the 6th Ultimate Taekwondo Cup which is the first classification for the Best of the Best 2014. Suriname has confirmed that they will be present with 15 athletes to participate in that competition.

